at the instance of the Municipal Council which proposes to introduce electric lighting of the streets; and the Alleppey Council too is contemplating an electric supply scheme.

Neendakara Bridge.

23. As a first step in connecting Trivandrum with Cochin by a land route, the Quilon-Alleppey road was made and this was followed by the Alleppey-Arur road. The road lies across the bar at Neendakara and this has now to be crossed in a *junghar*. This is at all times slow work and in certain parts of the year attended with risk. The Government therefore decided to construct a bridge across the bar and the work which was started in August 1928 has been almost completed. It is expected that the bridge can be opened for traffic within the next month. With this, the road from Trivandrum to the Travancore frontier at Arur will be continuous but for a *junghar* crossing at Tottapally and Government propose to take up immediately the question of constructing a bridge there.

Forests.

24. There was a decrease of 1·2 square miles in the total area of the State reserved forests due mainly to the disafforestation, for purposes of assignment, of 1,155 acres from two reserves. More than one million and a quarter cubic feet of timber was extracted from the forests and sold for Rs. 14·58 lakhs, which was an increase of nearly Rs. 60,000 over the corresponding figure for the previous year. There was a slight fall in the net revenue of the department due mainly to the larger refunds of *kudivila*. The work of artificial regeneration of timber areas in the forests was also being carefully attended to and a fresh extent of 575·64 acres was leased out during the year under the *Taungya* system for planting teak. There has been some complaint that the free-pass rules as they are now worked cause hardship to the people. At the last budget session of the Legislative Council, it was suggested that the rules may be confined in their operation to areas which, on account of their proximity to Government forests, require to be specially watched for the conservation of Government timber. Accordingly the Government have appointed a mixed committee of officials and non-officials to demarcate the area that may, without danger to Government timber, be excluded from the operation of the free-pass rules.

Free-pass Rules.

Salt.

25. Arrangements were made from the beginning of 1104 with a view to popularise home salt and to enable the licensees of the factories working under the modified excise system to dispose of their share of the salt more easily. The licensees had till then to pay the duty before removing the salt from the factories for sale and this together with the cost of transport to the centres of sale meant the investment of large capital. Pre-payment of duty has now been dispensed with and licensees are permitted to remove the salt under bond to the Government depots at Trivandrum, Quilon and Alleppey on deposit of a com-

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